THE FINANCIAL POLICY OF CONGRESS.

(From the N. Y. Commercial Bulletin.)

THERE is a great deal of force in the views of Secretary McCulloch in his letter to Senator Sherman relative to the probable results of the action of Congress in repealing taxes without effecting a corresponding reduction of expenditures Congress, after years of error in making appropriations without designating the special sources of revenue from which they were to be derived, now seems to be drifting into the opposite extreme of abolishing revenue without diminishing expenses. Both of these extremes should be avoided. The only faults connected with the repeal of the taxes on cotton and manufactures are, that they were delayed so long. They were burdens and checks upon industry that could only be justified upon grounds of necessity during the civil war, and should have been repealed in the first session of Congress after its termination. There is nothing, therefore, to be said against the repeal of these taxes except that it carries with it a logical and financial necessity, that should not be disregarded, for retrenchment to a corresponding extent.

Mr. McCulloch's estimate that the repeal of the taxes on manufactures and cotton together with their effects in reducing customs revenue, will reduce the revenue of the next fiscal year to the amount of from $100 000,000 to $120,000,000 is probably correct. To off-set this a saving of $40,000,000 has been effected in the naval and military expenses, thus leaving a large deficiency that must be covered by other means So far Congress has manifested no disposition to cut down expenses to the ratio of the reduction of revenue. The Freedmen's Bureau is to be continued another year with a probability amounting almost to certainty that the expenses of Southern Reconstruction must be largely increased Then there are the special and extraordinary expenses of $25,000 000 for extra bounties, and $13 000 000 for accumulated interest on the Compound Interest Notes and the Seven-Thirties due in 1868, but entering into the next fiscal year.

The financial condition of the Government stands thus: The expenditures, according to Mr Blaine's estimates, for the fiscal year commencing June 30th, 1868, are $275,000,000 with a probability that it will be increased by contingent expenses to $300 000,000. Of this amount $115,000,000 will be required for gold interest on bonds, leaving a balance according to the lower estimate of $160,000,000 to be derived from other sources of revenue. Of these only the taxes on spirits, tobacco, petroleum, incomes, and banks are reliable; and these must be modified to a considerable extent before they can yield the maximum amount. Congress, by receding from its obstinate maintenance of the $2 tax on spirits, and adopting Mr Well's plan of a 50 cent tax may double the revenue from that source. Following Mr. Well's estimates, which so far have not been improved upon, the internal revenue may be estimated as follows:

Spirits	$50 000,000
Fermented liquors	7,000,000
Tobacco	25,000,000
Petroleum and Turpentine	10,000,000
Income and dividends	16,000 000
Banks	12,000,000
Total	$120,000,000

It will be seen then that there remains a deficiency of not less than $40,000,000 to be derived from other sources that do not yet appear, thus too effectually justifying the doubts that have been raised respecting the financial policy of Congress.

A COMPLIMENT TO CANADIAN WHEAT GROWING.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 16th, 1868.

To the Secretary of the Board of Trade, Detroit.

THIS department has made considerable efforts to procure a superior article of spring wheat grown upon this continent, in which direction I was obliged to look (coming into this department at too late a period to admit of the importation of foreign varieties) for the purpose of supplying a want for several years existing in the West.

It was thought that the improved Fife (spring) wheat, now so much prized in Canada, although not unknown to the farmer of the West, would be more likely to meet that want than any other, when submitted to climate changes, soil, &c., and in pursuance of that suggestion, I requested an experienced farmer in Canada West to select and forward to me for distribution about 150 bushels of that variety of wheat. It has been received by the department, with the advice that it was grown in different sections of Canada West, and on new land, and while I must confess it does not come up to my expectation in appearance, weighing but 60lbs to the bushel, measured, yet it may improve by cultivation in your section.

Before distributing this wheat, I have concluded to forward for your inspection a sample from each section, say one pound each. No 1 and No. 2—denoting its apparent quality, and if upon examination you consider it desirable to have it thoroughly tested, I will take pleasure in forwarding several bushels by express for that pupose, with a similar request to that made in reference to the distribution of the oats.

An early reply is requested.

HORACE CAPRON,

Commissioner.

AMERICAN SHIPPING.

(From the U. S. Economist.)

WE have repeatedly called attention to the prostrate condition of American shipping, and the necessity of some measures being taken by Congress for relieving this most depressed branch of our national interests. It would appear that all such entreaties find a deaf ear in Congress. Our legislation is in the hands of those who despise foreign commerce, treat it as inimical to domestic interests, and who therefore cannot be expected to have any sympathy with the interest that bridges the oceans and places us in communication with the markets of the world. They would appear to be actuated by an idea that the most effectual way of protecting our home industries is to annihilate the vessels that convey foreign products to our shores. We are satisfied therefore for a time to suspend protests and simply to chronicle the statistics which show the rapid decadence of our marine interests, hoping that some day the people may awake to a sense of our humiliated condition and demand a reformed policy. The following comparison will show the amount of our foreign trade carried in domestic and foreign vessels respectively in the years 1857, 1860 and 1867:—

Year.	In American Vessels.	In American Vessels.
1857	$405,485,462	$131 189,904
1860	507,247,757	255 040,793
1867	296,675,185	577,627,752

The amount of tonnage entered at New York during 1867 was larger than in any former year, the total tonnage being 2,791,480. Of this total 1,027 708 was in American vessels, and 1,763,772 in foreign. The following shows the entries since 1860:

Entered at New York from Foreign Ports during the year 1867.

	No. of vessels	Tonnage.	Seamen
American vessels	1 810	1,027,608	81,775
Foreign vessels	2,799	1,763,772	65,361
Total entered in 1867	4,609	2,791,480	97,136
Do. 1866	4 827	2,766 434	95,305
Do. 1865	4 640	2,248,273	78 959
Do. 1864	4,775	2,261,906	81,750
Do. 1863	4,983	2 382,374	82,136
Do. 1862	5,406	2,552,481	81,817
Do. 1861	4,977	2 483 704	78,264
Do. 1860	4,346	2,164,601	72,510

The clearances, during the same period in domestic bottoms are about one-half those in foreign, as will appear from the following comparison for a series of years past:—

Cleared at New York for Foreign Ports during the year 1867.

	No. of vessels.	Tonnage.	Seamen
American vessels	1 445	910,013	28,386
Foreign vessels	2 812	1,812,609	64,346
Total cleared in 1867	4 257	2,722,922	93,732
Do. 1866	4,406	2 612 210	90,731
Do. 1865	4,192	1 159,324	74 717
Do. 1864	4,460	2,259,443	74,884
Do. 1863	4,666	2 391,605	76,669
Do. 1862	5,016	2,487,852	77,086
Do. 1861	4,608	2,388,766	74,925
Do. 1860	3 812	1 970,997	66,750

For the purpose of illustrating the proportion of our trade alone under American and Foreign flags, we present the following statement of tonnage entered at New York, American and Foreign for, a series of years past:—

Tonnage at New York from Foreign Ports.

Calendar Year.	No. of Arrivals.	Tons American.	Tons Foreign.	Total tons
1855	3 391	1,439,257	220,000	1,562,257
1856	3,861	1,684,596	386,2[illegible]3	2,070,859
1857	3,851	1,478,579	492 425	1,971,004
1858	3,421	260,043	433,[illegible]28	1,693 871
1859	3 905	1 302,025	597 826	1,899,851
1860	4 346	1,487,539	677,062	2,164,601
1861	4,077	1 618,258	865,446	2 483,704
1862	5,406	1,472,989	1,079,492	2,552,481
1863	4,983	986,713	1,395,634	2,382 347
1864	4 775	845 172	1,416,734	2,261 906
1865	4 640	774,458	1,473 8[illegible]5	2,248,273
1866	4 827	990,116	1,776 318	2,766,434
1867	4 609	1,027,708	1,763,772	2,791,480

It will be seen that there is a partial increase in the home tonnage upon last year, while there is a nominal decrease in the foreign. We would fain hope that this is the beginning of a better condition of things; but the gain is too light to admit of any sanguine expectations Before the war two-thirds of the trade was done in domestic vessels; since two-thirds has been done in foreign This tells the whole tale; and a sad one it is to those who have at heart the interests of our foreign commerce. It would be useless, amid the present indifference of our law makers to this interest, to suggest any remedy. It has been asked within the present month that shipbuilders be allowed a drawback equal to the tax upon all taxed articles used in building vessels; but the request was promptly refused. There is but one really effective remedy, viz., free trade in shipping, liberty to our ship-owners to buy ships in the cheapest markets. But this is out of the question. It would violate a principle of "protection;" and sooner than do that, our shipping trade may be allowed to perish.

The movement of grain down the Mississippi to the various markets of the world goes steadily forward. A direct Liverpool order for 10,000 bags of white corn is now filling, and Messrs. Hole, Jones & Co., and Messrs. McFadden & Simmons, of Havana, Illinois, have 50,000 bushels of number one mixed *en route* for New York *via* New Orleans —*Missouri Democrat.*

IMMUNITY FROM FIRE.

(From the New York Commercial Bulletin.)

A STRANGE peculiarity in our character as a people is the indifference with which we regard, both individually and collectively, the devastation wrought by fire. Our apathy, it is true, does not extend to the degree of fatalism exhibited by the Oriental, who looks upon any effort to subdue the flames as an attempt to subvert a divine decree: we take some few precautions to avoid a conflagration, we provide an efficient fire brigade to prevent it from gaining too much headway, we insure our property, and there is an end to our foresight. Is it not time that we should adopt strenuous measures to avoid the immense losses incurred every year by fire? especially as it is clearly shown that with proper precaution we can obtain a quasi immunity from its ravages.

In London or Paris, or, indeed, any other European city, a large fire is of very rare occurrence, and this is clearly proved by the difference betw en their insurance rates and those ruling in this country. Prevention is the great cause. Architects and builders combine to avoid such a calamity, and the authorities in some cases enforce this action by stringent rules. In France a house cannot be inhabited before it has been officially inspected by competent officers, and so foresighted are they in their precautions that no gas pipe is allowed to be covered up in the ceilings or walls, so should there be an escape of gas it can be immediately detected and remedied. In this country we have a still greater danger to deal with. Half the fires with which we are visited originate in defective flues. If our builders could avoid placing any wood-work in their proximity we should soon see our fire returns and insurance rates materially reduced. This they may say is almost impossible, and yet there is another method to prevent fires from this cause, to which we would call their attention.

According to Mr Schattenmann's experiments there is an easy and cheap way to render wood incombustible, and that is by coating it with chloride of lime. It is true that this only protects the surface, but still it prevents the fire from catching hold of the wood. Dissolve the chloride and then add an equal quantity of slaked lime and apply it twice to the wood with a common white-wash brush. This can only be applied to rough work, as it white-washes the wood, but for inferior and covered up wood-work it is invaluable. Its efficiency can be easily tested. Take common ceiling laths and coat them twice with the mixture and lay them across the flames of any fire; they will not light, though in time they will become as charcoal, and still not communicate the heat to adjoining timber. This simple process that costs but twice the ordinary white-washing, might lessen by one-half the risks from fire, were it to be applied to all wood-work that is in close proximity to any flue. But we doubt, simple and inexpensive as it is, whether any of our builders would adopt this safeguard unless it were enforced by municipal laws.

THE ENGLISH GRAIN MARKET —The *Mark-lane Express* says: "If the rough estimate of four million quarters in last year's crop of wheat in the United Kingdom be correct, and old stores have been pretty well cleared, we have no slight difficulty with so many nations as competitors to make up the serious void. The soundness of the universal advance in prices through out Europe is seen i the fact that the demand is alone consumptive; speculation at present rates being out of the question, and for the same reason fluctuations must occur when markets are temporarily overdone."

A CO-OPERATIVE DRY GOODS HOUSE.

A COMPANY of New York capitalists are about to organize in that city an extensive dry goods house under the law of limited co-partnerships, to be conducted on the co-operative principle. They propose to begin business with a special capital of not less than $250,000, and such an amount of general capital as the parties selected for general partners may be able to furnish; the general partners to be selected with special reference to their experience and ability to take charge of one of the fourteen departments into which the business will be divided. The managers invite manufacturers and merchants to become special partners in this house to the extent of not less than $1,000 or more than $10,000.

The profits are to be divided as follows:—One-third to capital, *pro rata;* one-third to general partners; and one-third *pro rata* on the amount of goods purchased, to merchants who become special partners.

All goods are to be bought and sold for cash. The death of a general or special partner will not dissolve the co-partnership, nor render it general; and a general or special partner may sell his interest as provided in the contract, and retire from the concern without effecting its character. Under laws lately passed by the New York Legislature, capitalists may become interested in the proposed house without incurring any risk or liability beyond the amount contributed by them to the capital stock, which interest they can sell or transfer the same as any other personal property.

The object of this new organization is to reduce the cost of the interchange of commodities between producer and consumer; to make the interest of the buyer and seller mutual instead of antagonistic; to check the present system of credits, and to prevent, if possible, periodical financial revulsions; to encourage the practice of economy instead of extravagance, of honesty instead of deception—in short to inaugurate a new system of wholesale business by establishing a house that shall command the confidence and support of every respectable merchant and manufacturer.