

# Gazette of the United States.

[No. XXIV.]

SATURDAY, JULY 4, 1789.

[Published on Wednesday and Saturday.]

## THE TABLET.—No. XXIV.

[Conclusion of the Letter began in the last number.]

"After the middle age of life, it is not probable a man will find happiness in such objects, as have before been unpleasant to him."

I DO not blame my situation, but my temper for the discontentment I feel. My reflections all terminate in self-disapprobation. I suspended every enjoyment in my younger days that I might amass a fortune, with which I could experience the delights of leisure and indulgence without interruption. But I am now satisfied that the only way to be happy in old age is to cultivate habits of innocent amusement in youth, and to taste enjoyment as we go along. By this means, we need not in the latter part of life counteract the customs that have become familiar to us in the former.

My misfortune consists in having, in my early years of mankind, rejected and despised the passing pleasures of the day, that I might be more completely prepared for an undisturbed indulgence in future gratification. Sadly however am I deceived! I can form no relish for such new objects as my new situation presents.

Leisure is dreadful; because I have hitherto been intensely busy. Reading does not destroy such tediousness; because I have not formerly been delighted with books. Conversation is uninteresting; because I used to shun it, in order to follow my business. Rural occupations and scenes captivate me not; because I did not suffer myself to be pleased with them, when I was young.

If I visit my neighbours and find how contented they are, and how they envy my easy circumstances, I am out of all patience with myself. It is now the chief object of my care to impress on the minds of my children the necessity of habituating themselves to love conversation; to love innocent past-time and amusement; to cherish an inclination for books; and indeed to raise an attachment to many other habits that are always within the reach of every one, and which are inoffensive if not immediately useful. By this practice of genuine philosophy, they become gradually and safely familiarized to enjoyments, of which they mean to participate more liberally, when advance of fortune will permit, and an advance of years will authorize.

Those who pass away life as they ought will find all parts of it more equally pleasant than is commonly imagined. The disgusts and loss of pleasure attending old age are principally occasioned by improper habits and false hopes, that are formed in our youthful days. Men begin a career of life which, they will tell you, is unpleasant or perhaps vicious, resolving to lay aside their vices or improve their pleasures at some future time, when it is more convenient. Here lies the mistake; they are so controuled by custom that they must end their days, as they began them; and consequently they will not probably be happy and virtuous when they are old, if they were not so, when they were young. Whenever we see an old man miserable, we must not of course conclude that age is the cause of it, but must attribute it to the prevalence of past errors.

I have never habituated myself to take satisfaction in any thing but pursuits of business. My activity in some measure fails me, and toil and anxiety are becoming insupportable; but still I can find no substitute that is not more disagreeable. None of the habits of my youth are suitable to carry with me into old age. The last periods of my life will therefore yield me little consolation. Every man should accustom himself to enjoy the innocent pleasures that fall in his way, as they present themselves, even if it a little interferes with acquisitions of property. I am far from advising a person to a course of extravagance or dissipation, or to an indolent, vicious life; but there are many gratifications not incompatible with virtue, and not materially detrimental to interest. Men destined to hard labour have not much occasion for this precaution, as any change of circumstances with them will be for the better. I am speaking of those who are extensively engaged in profitable operations; and who constantly subject themselves to self denial, with a view, as they say, of enjoying life hereafter in greater perfection. But let me tell them from experience that no incident can afford them pleasure, that counteracts their past habits; and that the true art of happiness consists in innocently snatching it, as we go along, from whatever offers. Those who gain satisfaction from anticipating happy days are in a fair way to disappointment. No days are happy to a mind disqualified by old habits from tasting such gratifications, as the present period or present circumstances can afford."

The reader will determine for himself whether my correspondent or my preacher has taken the best side of the question.

## On the COIN of the UNITED STATES.

If the unit dollar was made worth exactly 100 dismes of the value of the English half-pence, it would be then 50d. sterling—and sterling standard is, according to Sir Isaac Newton (master of the mint, in 1716) the standard of England, France, Holland and Spain; which I therefore call the commercial standard, or the standard of the commercial countries, which ought to be observed by us who are to trade chiefly with them. Our Congress dollar has more of alloy than the commercial standard, the gold has the same alloy: Yet one dollar has so little of alloy more than sterling, that it is of less consequence than the former deviation in the cent weighing but 157 1-2gr. of copper, when the English halfpence is 166 gr. of copper. If one cent was 166 grains, it would be equal to the English halfpence; and then 100 cents or halfpence making a dollar, would give it the sterling value of 50d. (or 100 cents or half pence.) The division into tenths of account and coin, is wonderfully convenient. How easy to multiply and divide 16849 cents by dots alone—a dot reduces it to dismes and cents—another dot to dollars, &c. thus: 16. 8. 4. 9 are eagles, dollars, &c.

The coin of the United States reduced into sterling, (which is the standard fineness of the great commercial nations, France, Britain and Holland, with whom we must traffic) would stand thus:

Mills.	Cent.	Di.	Dol.	Eag.	s. d. Sterling.
10					0 1-20
100	10				0 1-2
1000	100	10			5
10000	1000	100	10		4 2
				10	41 8

Monies of account are dollars, dismes, cents; and are wrote

Dol.	di.	cent.
463	9	8
689	6	4
1153	6	2

But money of account may be kept in only one column, that is in cents or mills; which are instantly thrown into other denominations by the simple application of dots, thus—You receive 3 Eagles, 9 dollars, 7 cents—Enter those figures in your book without any dot, when they will be read 3907 cents, the cypher filling the place of dismes; or read it 3 eagles, 9 dollars, 7 cents; or 39 dollars, 7 cents.

Mills, cents and dismes in columns never have more than one figure in the line; for, as often as they amount to 10, the tens are carried forward and the unites are placed in the column. The above table is of a dollar of the value of 50d. although we are to have dollars coined that are fractional respecting both English and French monies: 52d. 64-100ths do not answer exactly to livres, and less to sterling pence or shillings.

The Congress division of monies being in an exact decimal method, admits of multiplication and division by only placing dots or taking them away. It is the quickest, most certain and easy way of reduction, both for the learned and unlearned. Those who can read figures, may avail themselves of the simple application of dots for throwing Congress money from mills or cents into dollars, dismes and cents, or into eagles, dollars, dismes, cents, and mills, thus—14689 cents are changed into the higher denominations, by dots: A dot on the left of the unit's place gives dismes and cents, 1468.9; another dot on the left of the ten's place, gives dollars, dismes and cents 146.8.9. If eagles are to be paid, another dot on the left of the hundred's place, give eagles, dollars, dismes and cents 14.6.8.9.—These are again thrown into money of account by writing or reading the figures without the dot for eagles, 146.8.9; or if your accounts are kept in only one column, of cents, omit all the dots, 14689.—Interest and commission how easily reckoned! —5 per cent. on the above sum of 146.8.9 or 14689, amounts to 7dol. 3di. 4cent. 45-100.

73445

The convenience would be great in having the unit dollar at the value of 50d. exactly: a cent would then be a halfpenny sterling—If the dollar be worth more or less than 50d. equal to 100 cents, it will, without necessity, make fractions, that will be inconvenient in exchanging. The present declared dollar is worth 52d. 64-100 of a penny sterling. The value of gold and silver coins is only to the amount of the fine metal. Alloy is used only for the purpose of hardening them, and is of very minute value when separated; it otherwise is a disgrace to those precious metals. The Congress dollar contains 375 64-100 grains of fine silver, and 34 15-100 of copper. The only standard Spanish dollar discovered by Sir Isaac Newton, is the old pillar piece of eight, which contains of fine silver 385 72-100, and of alloy 31 275-100 grains, worth exactly

53d. 87-100, but passed currently for 54d.—A dollar of 358 1-10 grains fine, and 29 35-1000 alloy, would be of the same standard fineness, and worth 50d. exactly, and divides into tens, in even numbers, without deviating from well known monies of the foreigners, great in commerce, with whom we must have commerce even against prejudices.—The dollar of 52d. 64-100 agrees, nearly, with the livre; 5 of them making such a dollar within 14-100 of a penny, when the livre is at 10d. 1-2 sterling: And the dollar of 50d. agrees exactly with pence sterling; which again exactly agrees with cents: For, 50d. being a dollar, 100 cents are 50d. the one attends money that is permanent, never varying—the other regards money that is less fixed. Monies that are the least fixed, are the most suitable to gamesters and sharpers; such too are coins of inferior fineness to the standard of the great commercial nations; be it ever so small, it stamps a stigma on it; clipped coins are also the best creatures of those sharpers.

The debts and contracts among some millions of people of the United States at present, generally stand stated in sterling money, or in the current monies of the respective States, under the old denomination of pounds, shillings, and pence: Some however are in dollars—that is Spanish pieces of eight of the value of 54d. sterling. Many millions of accounts of those debts are, henceforward, to be reduced from those denominations to Congress dollars, dismes and cents so as to preserve the value of the debts. How is this last to be done? Will it be as readily performed as if the Congress dollars were of the exact value of 50d. and the cent of the exact value of a halfpenny sterling?

Our citizens well know what pence sterling are, that 54 of them are equal to a Spanish piece of eight, and 108 halfpence are also of that value; and the people of every State know the par of exchange between the dollar in sterling and in the currency of the State—that the dollar of 54d. sterling is, in the middle States, equal to 90d. currency, &c.—So that if the Congress dollar was exactly worth 50d. sterling, its cents would be equal to halfpence; and all sterling debts thrown into halfpence, are at once turned into Congress money. An instance: A is to pay a debt; of £.54 6 8 sterling, in Congress money. That sum contains 13040 pence, or 26080 halfpence, that is cents; which by dots are thrown into 260.do. 8.di. 0.c.—If a debt is in currency, £.90 11 1, of the United States, 7/6 the Spanish dollar, then by first reducing into halfpence, and subtracting 2-5ths, you have 26080 cent; i. e. 260.dol. 18.di. 0.c. equal to £.90 11 1 currency. There may be clearer and more concise methods; but, this is noted off hand.

It is not surprizing that objections should be made by simple people, to the change of terms from £. s. d. to Dol. dismes, cents.—But, assuredly, the divisions into tens (with those new terms) will presently become familiar, and are the most excellent above those of all other nations, for ready and correct reckoning, to the unlearned as well as the learned. It is the most natural and harmonious division ever discovered. Some object to the columns of money account requisite for separating Dol. dis. cents; that inconvenience will flow from the use of three columns, they at present using only two, for dollars and ninetieths; but, three columns they have been used to in £. d. s.—However, the Congress money admits of those people, and all others, pleasing themselves by a choice of columns from 4 or 5 down to one: Of which here follow specimens:

Eag.	dol.	di.	cent.	mil.
6	4	8	5	8
1	8	3	6	9
12	1	0	8	7

  

Dol.	di.	cent.	mil.	Dol.	di.	cent.
20	4	3	1	4		
64	8	5	8	64	8	5
8	3	6	9	8	3	6
1	0	8	7	1	0	8

  

74	3	1	4	74	2	9
	cents.	mills.			cents.	
	6485	8			6485	
	836	9			836	
	108	7			108	
	7431	4			7429	

How plain and simple this last.—Dots will divide the sum as you please.

The eagle containing 10 dollars of 50d. (see table) is worth 2 guineas, French or English, and rather more. The English guinea, current at 21s. sterl. is only worth 20s. 8d. or 10d. according to Sir Isaac Newton, who by the bye, asserts, that the fineness of French, English and Dutch money, is so nearly alike, that he considers it the same in them all, in standard goodness. Therefore sterling is a standard of the monies of the great commercial nations, and ought to be equalled, most exactly, by the monies of the states.

B.