

Taxes 101

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Spell and Define: 1. *Inevitable*, not to be avoided; admitting of no escape. 2. *Locomotion*, act of moving from place to place. 3. *Pampers*, feeds luxuriously. 4. *Ermine*, the pure white fur of ermine. 5. *Couchant*, lying down. 6. *Levant*, rising up. 7. *Apothecary*, one who prepares and sells drugs and medicines. 8. *Probate*, the proving of the genuineness and validity of a will. 9. *Chancel*, the part of the church containing the altar, or communion table. 10. *Avaricious*, greedy, miserly. 11. *Profuse*, lavish, extravagant. 12. *Generate*, bring into existence. 13. *Pestilent*, noxious, destructive. 14. *Odious*, hateful. 15. *Prodigious*, enormous. 16. *Revenue*, income. 17. *Invest*, empower. 18. *John Bull* and *Jonathan* are cant names for England and the United States.

1. John Bull can inform Jonathan what are the inevitable consequences of being too fond of glory: --- TAXES ! taxes upon every article which enters into the mouth, or covers the back, or is placed under the foot; taxes upon every thing which is pleasant to see, hear, feel, smell, or taste; taxes upon warmth, light, and locomotion; taxes on every thing on earth, and the waters under the earth; on every thing that comes from abroad, or is grown at home; taxes on the raw material; taxes on every fresh value that is added to it by the industry of man; taxes on the sauce which pampers man's appetite, and the drug that restores him to health; on the ermine which decorates the judge, and the rope which hangs the criminal; on the poor man's salt, and the rich man's spice; on the brass nails of the coffin, and the ribbons of the bride; --- at bed or board, couchant or levant, we must pay.

2. The schoolboy whips his taxed top; the beardless youth manages his taxed horse, with a taxed bridle, on a taxed road; --- and the dying Englishman, pouring his medicine, which has paid seven percent., into a spoon that has paid fifteen per cent., flings himself back upon his chintz-bed, which has paid twenty-two per cent., makes his will on an eight-pound stamp, and expires in the arms of an apothecary, who has paid a license of a hundred pounds for the privilege of putting him to death. His whole property is then immediately taxed from two to ten per cent. Beside the probate, large fees are demanded for burying him in the chancel; his virtues are handed down to posterity on taxed marble; and he is then gathered to his fathers, --- to be taxed no more.

3. In addition to all this, the habit of dealing with large sums will make the Government avaricious and profuse; and the system itself will infallibly generate the base vermin of spies and informers, and a still more pestilent race of political tools and retainers of the meanest and most odious description; while the prodigious patronage which the collecting of this splendid revenue will throw into the hands of Government, will invest it with so vast an influence, and hold out such means and temptations to corruption, as all the virtue and public spirit, even of Republicans, will be unable to resist. Every wise Jonathan should remember this.

Questions:

1. How does the writer represent the evils of oppressive taxation?
2. What effect upon government is produced by the habit of dealing with such large sums of money?
3. What other ill effects grow out of the system?
4. What caution closes the piece?