

“UNION THE BOND OF PEACE.”

THE
ORIGIN AND PROGRESS
OF THE
PRESENT DIFFICULTIES
BETWEEN THE
UNITED STATES AND
GREAT BRITAIN, AND FRANCE
CONSIDERED.

TOGETHER WITH SOME REFLECTIONS
ARISING OUT OF THE SUBJECT.

BY A CITIZEN OF OTSEGO COUNTY.

Utica :

PRINTED FOR THE PURCHASER.

1809.

TO ALL WHO MAY CONDESCEND TO READ
THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT.

GENTLEMEN,

IT is not with a view to provoke or arouse the angry passions of such as may entertain ideas different from mine on the subject that I address you, or from any desire I have of wounding any man's feelings who is honest and sincere in his professed attachment to his country : neither do I wish to increase the difficulties now subsisting between our government and that of Great-Britain ; nor am I destitute of an honest regard for my own mother country, which I believe consistent with truth and reason. My partiality in favor of England is quite natural : I was born and educated under that government ; I professed the same form of religion with his Majesty, and which was established the national religion ; I never took up arms against his Majesty, or encouraged others so to do, although in the war with America I was not reconciled, believing it to be unjust and cruel. I also believe that the same unjust and cruel disposition remains in many of their rulers unto this day. That men of reading and observation have had sufficient opportunity to discover this by their conduct towards America since the peace, I do not question ; neither do I doubt but that all such are satisfied in their own minds that it is really so ; but there are many, it is to be feared, who shut their eyes against the light in the political as well as in the religious world ; and who, for party purposes, deny the truth and hold up error, and thereby deceive the simple and unsuspecting who confide in them for correct information. I therefore avow my motive for writing on this subject :—It is for their sakes who are thus deceived.

As to myself, I am perfectly well satisfied with the constitution, and with both the present and the last administrations of the national government, notwithstanding we have had an embargo, with provisions to carry it into effect, and a non-intercourse which was denounced, worse than the embargo. These great national measures have been loudly reprobated—but what of all this ? Is there no way in which we may fairly account for these things ? Yes, replies one, I can account for them ; it was our bad rulers who, without any cause, brought these difficulties and privations upon us. Stop, my friend, this is not accounting for the difficulties at all ; it is only attributing them to a certain source as the cause of them. Perhaps you may by investigation find out a cause for all those difficulties without any imputation to your rulers. With a view to this, I began to write : I purpose treating the subject under this impression ; and if my remarks should come before the public, they must be their own judges how far I have succeeded, and wherein I have come short. The subject is a serious one ; at least it is so to me. To criminate the innocent or to clear the guilty, I hope I shall not attempt : but who is he that would not rejoice, if, after a fair statement of facts, it evidently appears, that our rulers instead of bringing difficulties upon us, have done the best they could to save us from those difficulties.

Let us now enquire what our rulers have done in order to preserve the nation in peace and prosperity. In the first place, I would observe that France and England, for these many years past, have been determined to take all possible advantages of circumstances in order to oppress each other. This we have seen in the instance of France assisting America in gaining her independence—not out of love to America, but hatred to England. In the second place, let us recollect the conduct of England towards France since the revolution in that country took its rise, and here we discover, that notwithstanding their opposition

to the Pope and Popish religion, when both the one and the other were in danger of being exterminated by a just vengeance* for the innocent blood which they had shed and caused to be shed ; when the Popish priests who were always devising means for the destruction of the protestants who dwelt amongst them—I say, when those bloody men were about to receive their just deserts, England interposed, by her fleets and armies, to support *Antichrist*,† which she had often declared the Pope to be. But what had she to do with the French nation on this occasion ? Was it ever known that they espoused the cause of protestants against papists ? No, by no means ; they would not, even though it were just. But we see England, although it was contrary to her creeds, to her Sunday prayers for the downfall of

* “ Vengeance is mine, I will recompence saith the Lord.”—That the power of the kings and priests of France were absolute, is well known among all nations, and that this power was exercised by them over the peaceable inhabitants of that country merely for dissenting from the pope, is well attested by history. Thousands of the protestants, for no other cause, were butchered by them in the most cruel and barbarous manner possible, without respect to age or sex, and always by the special command of his holiness, the pope, or under his controule ; such cruelties were resented by the English government, their ministers wrote large volumes to prove that the perpetrators could not escape punishment, that vengeance would most certainly overtake them, and the just judgments of God fall upon them for their wickedness, and that their arm of power would soon be broken in pieces by HIM unto whom all men are accountable.—This event was most certainly anticipated soon after the revolution began, and is now in some degree effected.

† My European brethren know very well, that this appellation belongs to the pope, according as the ministers of the church of England explain the scriptures, you know he is represented by them to be the beast and the false prophet, and the church of Rome to be the mother of harlots, you also know that the government has enjoined it on the ministers to use the forms of prayers which they have established, and among those to be used every Lord's day we find denunciation against the pope and popish religion, and Deity invoked to overturn both the one and the other. Now it is not for me to say whether this be right or wrong, the thing is, whether the English are consistent in praying for their downfall, and when this is likely, to strain every nerve to support them.

Popery, to her government and laws, and to the protestant interest in general, from some motive espouse theirs; and indeed the events that have taken place since that period, fully demonstrate that her motive must have been corrupt from the beginning. At this time there was nothing to provoke her resentment, except as has been observed that France had assisted* America to gain her independence. But this alone was sufficient cause. They had not forgotten the plans they had formed and the stratagems they had laid in order to subjugate America; but that, through the interposition of a kind Providence, and aided by France, they were obliged to renounce their unjust and cruel designs. These things ought not to be forgotten by Americans—they are not forgotten by Englishmen; and in my opinion, by keeping them in view we may easily account for most, if not all of that desolation and destruction which as a flood hath overspread the continent of Europe from that time to the present. If Great-Britain is so implacable in her resentment towards an auxiliary, what must it be towards the principal? If France, yea, the whole continent of Europe, hath suffered and now suffer chiefly by their means, and in consequence of the revolution and the cir-

* That G. B. had other motives arising from various considerations besides this I make no doubt; but whether any other was equal to this in magnitude I scruple to believe. Yet whatever resentment she might feel on this account, or however settled in her determination to take revenge when an opportunity offered, at this time she was doubtful whether it was expedient in her present circumstances to take an active part therein, hence it was that after strengthening herself by alliances with Prussia, Austria, Spain and the Pope, and persuading them that religion was in danger, and from other considerations, at last prevailed upon them to declare war against France and she would reimburse them. Her conduct at this time was so provoking to her enemy, that no pains have been spared since then to turn the nations, and form an alliance against her. Thus have they exerted themselves in opposition to each other, by which means the whole continent of Europe has been and still is in commotion, and thousands of poor souls hurried into the world of spirits to gratify their ambition.

cumstances attending it, how can Americans reasonably expect to be entirely free from difficulty of any kind ?

Having premised such things as I judged necessarily connected with the subject, I shall now attend to the process of those measures adopted by both France and England, which have been and still are just cause of complaint. And in order to do this fairly, I shall take liberty to observe, that after the armies of Great-Britain had been driven out of France, and all hope of conquering her in the ordinary way of warfare was exhausted, England devised the new and cruel mode of *starvation*.* Every revolutionary American knows that when any country is the seat of war, subsistence becomes difficult. They have gone through such scenes, and can recollect the time and place when a crust of brown bread was very acceptable. In these circumstances, how hard hearted the wretch must have appeared who would have snatched the morsel from their trembling hands, and then laughed and exulted at their distress. This was the situation of the French people in consequence of their country being the seat of war : and not having the means of subsistence within themselves, they were obliged to look for it from another quarter. The Americans, as well as others who stood neuter, possessing a surplus of the necessaries of life which they wanted, and no doubt sympathising with them in their afflictions, and also desiring to carry their produce to the best market, accordingly cleared for French ports ; but the English, who were straining every

* This could only be effected by keeping them so involved by land that they could not cultivate the ground, and by destroying the lawful commerce of all nations who were not at war with them ; and having the whole continent in their favor, which she thought sufficient to effect the first, while their fleets should be parcelled out in every direction to execute the second. By these means the French were brought into straightened circumstances ; provisions were very scarce, and consequently dear ; the poor were suffering on the account. Their cries reached Great-Britain and Ireland ; contributions were made, and sent over by proper persons, for their relief, and thereby they were delivered from the cruelty of the devise in the extreme.

nerve to crush the French, would not suffer them to enter their ports, thereby violating the rights of independent neutral nations, as well as the dictates of humanity, only from a spirit of revenge against their enemies. Thus circumstanced, what would be natural to any nation? It is said, "hunger will break through a stone wall:" but the French were encompassed by the British navy, which was worse, far worse to break through; because it was certain they were watching the motions of the neutrals in every quarter; and although they might possibly escape some, it was hardly practicable to elude the vigilance of the whole. Yet they made the attempt, and succeeded, at least in part. You no doubt remember when wheat was from two and an half to three dollars per bushel in Albany: If you do not remember it, it was the case; and the French fleet was then in New-York, waiting for their cargoes, in order to return to their suffering brethren. While on their way, how anxious must they have felt for their safety, having fathers, mothers, brethren and sisters, &c. waiting, longing, and yet fearing their safe return. This appears as similar to Jacob's sending his sons down to Egypt to buy corn, as any thing I have ever read or realised. Both had to go prepared to fight their passage, and both were very uncertain of the event.

The Berlin decree has been justly complained of, as hostile to neutrals; but the foregoing fact, which was prior to that decree, is hardly mentioned. Great-Britain had not even the shadow of a *decree** to screen her from that just resentment which every honest man must feel in such circumstances: her power to control her enemies, and the world, by sea, was her decree. Although the absurdity of

* When the above was written, the author had no knowledge or remembrance of the orders in council of January 9, 1793, by which all vessels bound to France, and laden with corn, meal or flour, were, if taken, considered lawful prize: and another order in council, Nov. 6, the same year, to stop and detain all vessels carrying provisions to the colonies of France.

this proposition is so glaring that it cannot be hid, yet some have been so hardy as to venture its vindication. In order to retaliate on the English for this and similar conduct, the Berlin decree was passed : but what efficacy was there in paper decrees, when not carried into effect ? The French were not able to enforce their decrees, and the English knew it very well ; but yet under this decree, they might pick up a few vessels, whether English or others, and have some show at least of defense for their conduct.

It has been frequently argued, that the orders in council were issued in consequence of the decrees of France ; but I cannot think so, because before either were issued, the English admirals, captains, and underlings, had done just as they pleased, when they had opportunity. For instance, they impressed our men, regardless of their government, which had promised to protect them ; they had forced them into their service, and at the point of the bayonet obliged them to fight and plunder both their own neighbors and kindred. But they have done even worse than this : they killed Pearce, as though they wished to convince Americans, if possible, that they were still their implacable enemies.— And they have not stopped here. Shortly after, and very unexpectedly, they attacked one of our national ships ; several men were killed, others were wounded, and others were carried off prisoners, and all as unjustly as can possibly be conceived of. If such is the wickedness of Great-Britain towards America, while she is constantly holding out the olive branch, and using every mean to conciliate them ; if they are so far lost to all that is esteemed honest and honorable, even among barbarous nations, that they will treat their best friends as though they were their worst enemies, and in a state of warfare, what is to be expected of them towards their avowed and open enemies ?

Next follow the orders in council. You will here please to observe three things : First, the killing of Pearce ; this was disavowed by the murderer's government, but after a

sham trial he had his sword restored to him, and was promoted to greater honor, for his meritorious conduct in killing an American. Secondly, Berkley was recalled from his station at Halifax, for ordering the attack on the Chesapeake, (as *they* say) but how can we believe them that this small satisfaction was the real cause, when, Thirdly, in a few weeks after, they issued their pernicious orders in council ! Was this measure calculated to make reparation to the Americans for the unparalleled injuries they had received, or to heal their wounds by convincing them of the sincerity of the British cabinet in disavowing the conduct of their servants ? Most certainly not ; but quite the reverse : and Americans might have been convinced at that time what the conduct of that government would be towards them. For myself, I was convinced, and I have not been deceived. I had full conviction, from the orders in council and the insulting language of their minister, Rose, that they meant to drive America into their measures, if possible. I said then, and I say now, that Great-Britain never intended to make reparation for the attack on the Chesapeake, or for any other injury, unless compelled to it in some way or other. She knew that war was dreaded by every American as the worst of evils, and that they would endure almost every thing rather than engage in the shedding of blood. She has long been jealous of America, and fearing her rapid growth, and consequently strength, both by sea and land, and remembering how she had deprived herself of the advantages arising from the trade of these states, as colonies, and fostering an idea that something might be done towards bringing them back at this time—under these impressions, I make no doubt, the orders were passed. But some will say, that this could not be ; Great-Britain has had no idea of bringing the United States back to their colonial condition. But if she had not such an idea, why did she presume to tax their produce, if exported to her ports, making this tax payable into her own treasury,

after unlading for that purpose and paying a heavy bill of expense consequent thereon, before permission could be obtained to relade ; and after all this trouble and expense, they must purchase a *License* from the British government, before they could proceed on their voyage. Is not this worse than any thing *that* government attempted to impose on us while we were colonies ? Was the *Stamp Act* and other duties then laid upon us half so degrading ? And would not submission to these orders degrade America beneath what they were when colonies ? Most certainly.— And are you disposed to submit once more—to bow the knee to his most *Gracious* majesty, George the third ? No, replies a good old revolutionary veteran ; I have fought and bled to gain the independence of my country, and I will again shoulder my musket and take the field in support of it. The liberties I have assisted in acquiring, I bequeath as a sacred gift to my posterity, and may they long possess wisdom and virtue sufficient duly to estimate their value.

Well, but, replies some one, cannot we avoid going into English ports with our produce, and thereby keep clear of paying taxes, duties, &c. &c. ? Yes, you may decline going into their ports, but what then ? Why by virtue of those orders, you are a lawful prize, if taken, merely for disobeying those orders, without any possible way of escaping from the loss both of ship and cargo. This is a plain statement of the case, and Mr. Canning, the British minister, will not deny it. How then can any man who has American blood in his veins, and values the independence of his country, apologize for these orders when submission to them destroys his independence ? I ask, then, who can seriously believe otherwise than that Great Britain has in every respect manifested an unfriendly disposition towards us.— Who is there among us who can recur to times and circumstances that have past—who remembers their obstinacy in refusing to give up the western posts agreeably to their stipulations by treaty, and the effort of Carleton, Governor

of Canada, by his speeches, to set the murderous savages on our backs—their ruinous depredations on our commerce in '98—the murder of Pearce, whose death is yet unatoned for—their late attempt again to set the savages upon us—the attack on the Chesapeake, and the murder of our men in that attack—and above all, their attempt to insult and humble us by their orders in council:—I say, who is there amongst us (*British agents and partisans and old Tories* excepted) who can calmly view all these repeated attempts to injure us, and yet believe that Great-Britain has any friendly disposition towards us, or that they seriously intend making us any reparation for injuries they have done us?

Being thus situated as it respects Great-Britain, and not very differently situated with respect to France, by the decrees of Bonaparte; deprived of our neutral rights, and even our independence as a nation threatened, something to maintain the honor and safety of the nation was necessary to be done. What then could be done which would at the same time preserve the honor and safety of the nation, and yet be conciliatory towards our enemies. War has been the ruin of the nations of Europe, and if we frequently embark in it, it will also prove our ruin. Great-Britain, by her wars since the reign of William and Mary, a period of about 100 years, has involved herself in debt to the amount of more than two thousand millions of dollars; and her subjects are now groaning under the almost insupportable burthen of taxes which are yearly raised to pay off the interest of that debt. Holland, Spain, and many other states of Europe are not much better circumstanced. The immense expense of our war with Britain is not yet forgotten. It cost us more than three hundred millions of dollars. Peace, then is the path that we ought to pursue, if we can consistently with our honor and independence; and so our rulers believed when they saw no alternative but to fight

our way, by war, in our trade abroad, or to keep our citizens and property at home by an embargo. The measure of the embargo was calculated to convince the world that we wished for peace, notwithstanding all the injuries that had been heaped upon us. To this measure there has, however, been a great opposition, as there has to almost every measure of the Republican administration. All those in opposition have nevertheless been at a loss for a substitute for the embargo; and when pressed to propose one, some of the most unblushing advocates for Britain proposed that we should treat with her on such terms as she would be pleased to allow us; that is, to submit to her impositions upon us and go to war with France in order to repel her aggressions. Such proposals might suit a *tory* very well; but to *whigs*, to those who view Britain and France with equal indifference—who value the peace, honor, and prosperity of their own country, and who have no blind partiality to any other, such proposals could only be received with abhorrence and detestation.

How long we may be suffered to enjoy the blessings of peace, we cannot determine. The political horizon is dark and portentous. England, it appears, by her late atrocious act of perfidy, in disavowing the negotiations entered into by her minister here with our government, seems as ill disposed toward us as ever. By that same act of perfidy, too, she has relieved herself from the distress which our embargo and non-intercourse laws had thrown her into; as she has now become supplied with cotton, provisions, and other articles which she wanted extremely, and has also been enabled to glut our markets with her goods and manufactures; so that she can now hold out in her iniquitous course a while longer. With France, it appears that our minister there, together with the French minister, is forming a treaty; but what will be the result of it we cannot as yet conjecture.

As I proceed, it becomes necessary, however unpleasant it may be, more fully to notice the late conduct of the British, and state the particulars of their disavowal of the negotiation entered into by their minister here. This is an event which stands, and probably ever will stand without a parallel in the history of nations.

Last spring, Mr. Erskine received instructions from his government, that his majesty was disposed to settle all dif-

ferences then subsisting between the two governments, and to make ample reparation for the injuries they had done ; but more especially the attack on the Chesapeake, and that if he found a similar disposition on our part, he should make arrangements to carry the same into effect. Accordingly, on the 17th of April, last past, Mr. Erskine opened the negotiation with our government. His propositions were well received. Every thing succeeded in due order, in the name of his government, until he had given the most ample assurance that reparation should be made, and that the orders in council should be withdrawn, so far as respected America, by the tenth day of June, last past. In return, and at the request of Mr. Erskine, our government pledged itself that the non-intercourse act (which had just passed) should be withdrawn so far as respected Great-Britain on the said tenth of June, last past. The business of negotiation on those points being thus amicably closed, the President of the United States gave notice thereof by proclamation, on the 19th, together with the official documents that passed on the occasion. Americans, not suspecting either the minister or his government, were highly gratified, not only because the minister had acknowledged the efficacy of the measures which our government had adopted, but because they wished for peace on just and honorable terms, and they now hoped it was secured. With this prospect, *Federalists* took a new stand : before it took place, their cry was “ non-intercourse worse than embargo ;” but now it was a salutary measure, and they were the cause both of it and the adjustment which had taken place in consequence of it ! This was a great mystery to republicans ; they could not account for it : how men, who had frequently declared that Great-Britain never would make propositions of peace to America, at least, till the president’s proclamation prohibiting their armed ships coming into our waters should be repealed, and by a steady and violent opposition, both in the national as well as in several of the particular state governments, had done all they possibly could, both to retard the progress of negotiation, and to render our rulers odious in the esteem of the people—that they should step forward and declare, “ we have succeeded (as instruments) in laying a foundation for the return of peace and prosperity to our injured country.

I say this was more than was expected, and more that could be accounted for on any principle hitherto explored, except this, that the leaders of that party had been in the habit of misrepresenting truth, and propagating error. To prove this, I need only refer you to their public speeches, letters, and pamphlets ; read Mr. Pickering's speech in the senate, his letter to Governor Sullivan, with many vindications by other hands, to wit, Messrs. Bayard and Hillhouse; in the senate. In reading, *mark well* the constant inundation of invective, pouring forth in torrents on the heads of departments, especially the president and secretary of state, charging them with dishonesty, partiality, duplicity and hypocrisy, and all their adherents with worse, if possible ; and yet, when by their honest and upright perseverance in right principles, they had achieved a laurel, (the confidence of the people) and well deserve to wear it on their brow—those self admirers, although conscious that they had justly reprobated themselves from any, even the least degree of right to claim in the affair, yet we see them in their usual vaunting manner, impute the whole to *their* patriotic exertions in opposition to the general government ! Their *pride*, supported by self will, would not suffer them to yield to conviction.

The next step which they took to deceive the people, and rob their rulers of their confidence was, that the same propositions made by Erskine to our government, had been made by Rose eighteen months before, and that our government had rejected them ; but as Mr. Rose never made any proposition to our government, they were easily detected and refuted ; besides, by their folly in persisting to support what was in itself insupportable, they exposed themselves to contempt and ridicule. But since all hope of conciliation on the ground of Mr. Erskine's propositions is vanished, and honest Federalists as well as Republicans are mourning on the same account, as this devolvment cannot be imputed to our government, but must certainly rest between the foreign minister and his government : Let us repose a just and reasonable confidence in our rulers, that as they have hitherto watched over the interests of the nation with unremitting assiduity, they will continue to use their best endeavors for our protection and safety. I doubt not but they feel anxiously concerned for both, and they will not be wanting in giving timely notice of every event in

which the nation is interested. As a prelude to this, we have had the President's proclamation advising, that as the orders in council were not repealed on the tenth of June, the non-intercourse which was suspended on these conditions, is now in full force, as though such stipulation had never taken place. Here is full proof of the union subsisting between the present and former president; and I hope his good friends will not fall off on this account, *for he is still a good federalist.*

Wherever the cause may originate, we find ourselves thrown back on the former administration, having no better prospects than we had last winter.* That Mr. Erskine should meditate such an event, is not reasonable. As an Englishman, he would not deceive his country; as a gentleman and a scholar, and as competent to his high station, he could not be deceived, especially as he had abundant time to know the mind of his government on those points before this; and further, the propositions embraced no more than they had said they were willing to do, except the rescinding of the orders in council.

I ask, then, how could he be deceived in so small a matter? I don't believe that he was either deceived or mistaken, but that he did exactly as he was instructed to do, and that all those who are his enemies will yet shrink from the imputation.

It appears very probable to me, that Mr. Erskine received the propositions in the form in which they were delivered to our government, and that he did no more than copy them. This has been suggested in the English parliament, where they have likely before this time ascertained the fact.

* That G. B. intended playing tricks with our government is now self-evident; by comparing the demand of Rose, with the conduct of the cabinet in disavowing Erskine's propositions leaves no room for hesitation; in this glass we see clearly that their boasted national honor is now very low, and that if they cannot avail themselves of the temporary advantage which they may gain by fraud in one way, they will try another. They found to their satisfaction that Rose was not the man, that *his* character stood too low in the esteem of our government to be a proper tool to work with on this occasion, they therefore lay him aside, and appoint a man highly esteemed both in his own, and in this country; they also vary their mode of proceeding and with great subtlety conceal their real and premeditated design.

Should this be substantiated before one month, by official documents, how many of our Americans will believe Mr. Bayard, where he says, "England is not our enemy, nor does a necessity exist to make her so." Perhaps England has overshot the mark for once, and gone farther than she intended ; but will this help the matter ? No ; for she cannot go backwards if it were for her interest so to do. This you have seen in the revolution, and depend upon it, you will see it again, as far as her power extends. It is often said England does not want to go to war with America. So it was said by many before the revolution ; but they found the contrary, and you would find so now if she were possessed of the means : this is all that saves you from her armies as heretofore.

Again it is said it is for her interest to be at peace with America. If she thought so, we should have had a treaty before this time, but the fact is, she cannot be at peace ; it is contrary to the possibility of her existence. Without the plunder of war, she cannot exist ; by this she has been supported for many years back, and when no longer able to support herself in this way, she must inevitably fall. Her apologists in this country know this, hence they tell us she is fighting for her existence. But what do they mean ? Is it that other nations will not suffer her to be in peace ? No ; they know better ; they know that her fleets must be supported, and this cannot be done unless they are in motion ; and being in motion, war in some kind or other is their object, and that frequently on their friends. Instance the taking the Danish fleet and the burning of Copenhagen, and the attack on the Chesapeake, ordered by Admiral Berkeley. Each of these were unprovoked and unprecedented, yet premeditated, which plainly proves, that they cannot, (or if you had rather) will not be at peace. If such facts can be overlooked by Americans, through an over-weeping partiality towards a power whose tender mercies are known to be so cruel, what will awaken them to a sense of their danger ? But it is said these were not the acts of government : The first was expressly so ; and the last, by being ordered by her servant in a highly important station, became so, for the want of reparation being made for the aggression.

This that government has now utterly refused to do, tho' pledged to the performance by their minister to our gov-

ernment in the most formal and solemn manner. Should this act of the basest perfidy fail to alarm our fears, and to reconcile us to the precedent measures of our own government, our situation will be deplorable indeed. From our own government do we derive the means of our salvation. Cease to support that, and we may cease to hope for safety. And shall we hesitate in a matter so obvious and interesting? Is any thing dearer to Americans than their rights as freemen? And shall these rights be assailed and destroyed by any haughty and overbearing power, without an honest struggle to maintain them? "The blood of our fathers shed for freedom, forbids the idea," cries every honest American from east to west and from north to south. "We are ready, and will support our rights at every hazard, but how shall we do it?" Let me answer, support that government which guarantees to you all the rights of freemen; and you do thus most effectually uphold the rights you so dearly prize. There is no room for suspence. If the people have any rights, being under whatever kind or form of government they may, they are secured by that government, and in trying times it is peculiarly the duty of every honest man to stand or fall with it. The above being granted, the question again returns, "What acts shall I do for the support of government?" In answering this highly important question, permit me first to advise in the negative what you ought not to do. And first, you ought not to indulge in unwarrantable jealousies of your rulers. This is a great and prevalent evil in our land; but it is unjust and cruel in the extreme. Second, you ought not to condemn their measures before you know the causes which produced them, and without which causes those measures would never have existed. This evil takes its rise from the former. Disliking the man, we dislike his deeds.— This was the principal cause of the clamor against the embargo. Those who had opened a credulous ear to the slanders heaped upon Jefferson, disliked him, and every measure he recommended was wrong of course. But the issue has justified the policy of the measure, and shown the wisdom of Jefferson in recommending it. Third. The voice of patriotism, of interest, and of honor forbids you to despise the authority of your government, or to encourage the violation of its laws. Had these three negative duties been fulfilled for two years past, we should long ago have been restored to our usual prosperity.

In the next place I would observe, that after having by your suffrages raised men to take charge of your national concerns and to preside over your destinies, you ought to support them in their official and in their private characters by every means consistent with truth, honor and honesty. If this be not done, you throw embarrassments in their way which, in difficult times, have a ruinous tendency. If they have to contend, as in the present case, with great and powerful opponents, in the same proportion as opposition is raised to them at home, will a perseverance in opposition to them be encouraged from abroad. The instance before us is a striking one to illustrate this position. If Great-Britain had found us all united and determined to support our rights ; if she had not been encouraged by a host of adherents here, depend on it she never would have persevered in the steps she has taken. But she has found us divided at home, and she has formed hopes (*vain* hopes, I trust) that by means of this division, she can effect her selfish purposes. In republics, there is no time in which the arm of its rulers ought to be so strong as in perilous and difficult times. Ancient Rome was so sensible of this, that in such times a Dictator was chosen who possessed absolute and despotic power over the state until the troubles and dangers were over. I am not contending for a dictatorship at any time in our government ; but this I will say, that in times like the present, every honest man ought to step forth and protect and aid his government in its measures. But alas ! to our shame be it spoken, very widely different from this has been the conduct of but too many amongst us. Too many have stepped forward to vindicate Great-Britain, and criminate our own government. Pickering, and many other British partisans have had the hardihood to tell us to our teeth, that " Great-Britain has done us no essential injury." Almost every petty merchant who imagines that his success in retailing staytape and buckram depends on the manufactures of Great-Britain—every despicable upstart who fancies that all which enobles human nature is to be dressed in a fine coat of British manufacture, were loud in their invectives against our government for not truckling to Britain ; and when the news reached us, at the last election, that Britain, through her minister here, had at last concluded to do us justice, these same creatures were loud & vociferous in their declarations

that she had offered us the same terms of accommodation more than 18 months before, and that our government, through stubbornness and attachment to France, had refused to accept them. A liar who belies, and thereby betrays, the rights of his own country, is the most despicable wretch on earth. Thanks to Heaven, these liars are now confounded in their own infamy ; for so far does it appear from Britain's offering to treat with us on terms of justice and equal rights, in fulfilling the negotiation of her minister here, (for those same liars have, by their declarations, virtually acknowledged that these terms were no more than what we had a right to demand) that they have preremptorily declared they would treat on no such terms with us, and that their minister was not authorised to offer the same. Do you not recollect the cry that was lately raised by these miserable creatures that Jefferson was a bad man ; that the same propositions had been offered to him by Britain 18 months before ; but that Madison was a good man, and a *federalist*, and therefore he had accepted them.

FELLOW-CITIZENS,

There is a set of men amongst us who once possessed power, which they abused, and of course they were stripped of it by their masters, the sovereign people. These men have long wished for a war with France, in order that we should be obliged to unite more closely with England, so that English *principles*, and of course the English form of *government*, should become better liked, and more fashionable amongst us. At the head of these men stood a _____ whose death has been as deeply deplored in England as it was amongst the federalists here. These same men had for some time the cunning and address to manage and hoodwink the late President Adams ; but he at last discovered their real designs ; he abandoned the measures they had chalked out for him, and drove Pickering, one of the principals, from office, and from his confidence. These men have fallen from an eminence, on which they once stood ; and conscious that they can never rise again on the merits of their own principles, and conduct while in power, they have constantly endeavored to bring odium upon the republican administrations of Jefferson and Madison, in hopes that by raising an incessant cry against them, their own demerits would be the more easily forgotten.

Any one, however, who closely inspects their conduct, and perceives the inconsistency of their declarations at one time compared with those made at another—who perceives how they can wriggle and twist and distort themselves into almost every shape, to gain the favor of the people; and in short, who perceives that at bottom their leaders are aristocrats and monarchists at heart, who could wink as easily and composedly at the *treason* of a *Burr*, or the project of a *dismemberment* of the *New-England states* from the union, as they can at every imposition the British have practised on us; such will, with me, be convinced that these men are unworthy public confidence, and ought not to be trusted with the concerns of the nation.

Notwithstanding, however, that we have detected so many of their falsehoods, their absurdities, and their deviations from the duties of patriotism, we are willing to admit, that such corruption of principles is confined to a few, and that the great body of the people are honest and sincere in their professed attachment to their country and government, and that they will give such demonstrative proofs of the same, as shall convince our enemies that they have principles and judgment of their own which they will exercise independent of any British or other partisan or emissary amongst us.

The precepts of the gospel teach us to believe that the severest dispensations of providence are blessings in disguise, in as much as they are fitted ultimately to promote our happiness. May not this be said with much truth of the late arrangements with, and the disavowal by the British government? The former has irresistably proved the impartiality of our government, and the latter as strongly evinces the little justice we have reason to expect from the British ministry.

Our union among ourselves is infinitely more important than the frowns or favors of the whole foreign world. It is only from our own divisions that we have any thing serious to fear. Other events may expose us to temporary inconvenience and injury; but so long as we remain firmly determined to support our own government, we may laugh at the dangers that beset us. They may impede our growth, but cannot destroy it. They may embarrass our industry, but cannot crush it.

There is indeed great truth in the adage, that *adversity is the school of Greatness*. The oak would not strike so deep a root, or sustain so extensive a superstructure, but for the storms of Heaven that beat upon it. It may be essential to the cultivation of our virtues, that we should feel the effects of vice, and we shall best appreciate the advantages of justice, by experiencing the evils of injustice inflicted upon us by others. We shall learn to respect ourselves, and set a due value on our situation, by comparing it with the wretched condition of other nations. We shall form a virtuous national character, and cease to worship every thing foreign.

In fine, we shall know the value of our rights, appreciate the inestimable blessings of civil and religious liberty, and realise that it requires as much virtue and wisdom to preserve, as it did to acquire them.

The following is a statement of the principal orders and decrees of Britain and France which have violated our commercial rights as a neutral nation.

The first hostile measure against this country since the peace of 1782, was a British Order of Council of the 9th January, 1793, to stop and detain for examination all vessels laden with corn, flour or meal, bound to France;—and by an order of council of the 6th of November of the same year, to stop and detain all vessels carrying provisions to the colonies of France; the result of these measures was that Congress passed a law at that time authorising President Washington to lay an embargo at any time during their recess, and continue the same till after their next meeting, in case he should deem the measure necessary. An embargo was accordingly laid by him; but in a few days after Mr. Jay arrived with the treaty which was afterwards adopted, and of course the difficulties with Great Britain were settled for that time, and continued so for eleven years; when most of the articles of that treaty expired.

All that is necessary to be observed is, that at *that* time the embargo was thought to be a proper measure, (because it was enacted by *federalists*) no fault was *then* found with the law, because it gave the President the sole, exclusive and absolute power of laying the embargo and taking it off when he pleased. What a clamor would have been

raised by these same federalists, if such powers had been vested in President Jefferson.

The next hostile measure against our commerce, was also on the part of G. Britain ; by a proclamation dated the 16th May, 1806. The coast of Europe, from the river Elbe to Brest was declared to be in a state of rigid blockade ; and of course our vessels were interdicted the trade of that length of coast under pain of condemnation and forfeiture.

The only blockades recognised by the law of nations, are, where the entrance to *particular ports* is made *dangerous* by forces actually before it ; but a blockade of *all* the ports of half the coast of Europe, by mere *proclamation* when in fact not a single port perhaps in all that distance was legally blocked up, was as absurd as to pretend to blockade the whole earth ; and was, on the part of Great-Britain, a most unjustifiable infraction of neutral rights.

The abominable injustice of this measure excited the attention of Bonaparte. His minister, (Mr. Champagny) remonstrated with our minister at Paris, (Mr. Armstrong) upon the subject—who assured the Frenchman that our government were very far from acquiescing in the measure, and that they had remonstrated against it, but to no purpose. “ Well then,” replies Bonaparte, “ if Great Britain, in carrying on her warfare against us is to be suffered to violate the law of nations, we will follow her example and avail ourselves of the same weapons”—and accordingly, in the true spirit of retaliation, Bonaparte issued his celebrated Berlin decree of November, 1806 ; declaring the whole of Great Britain and her dependencies in a state of blockade. The French government assuring ours at the same time, that this decree should not be enforced to our injury ; nor was it ever enforced against us until near a year afterwards, in the case of the ship *Horizon*, which was condemned under it a few days previous to the British orders in council of Nov. 1807 ; which were issued as a pretended retaliation upon the Berlin decree, although the British government was fully informed of the disposition of the French government to except us from its operation, and before she could possibly have obtained any information of the condemnation of the *Horizon*.

These orders of November, 1807, prohibited all American commerce with any European port from which the British flag was excluded, under pain of condemnation, unless carried on under *British licenses*.

But in this measure the flagrant injustice and inconsistency of the British government, is most glaringly exemplified. For she endeavored to silence our complaints and remonstrances against her violations of national law and neutral rights, by pretending that her only resort was to deprive her enemies of the benefit of *our commerce*—and yet she was very willing that *that commerce* should be carried on under licences purchased from *her*.

Then followed the Milan decree of December, 1807, declaring every vessel lawful prize, that had suffered the visit of an English vessel, submitted to an English voyage, or paid duty to the English government; and also every vessel coming from G. Britain or any of her colonies.

Then followed the British acts of parliament of 1808, for carrying into execution the orders of council of 1807, imposing a *tax* upon American produce allowed to be re-exported to the continent, under said *licences*, of two shillings and sixpence sterling, on every hundred weight of tobacco; two shillings per pound on indigo; seventeen shillings and six pence on every hundred weight of pork; nine pence per pound on cotton wool; and on all other articles not enumerated in those acts, a duty of 40 per cent.

Then follows the Bayonne decree of April, 1808; which subjects all American vessels found on the high seas since the embargo, to capture and condemnation.

FINIS.

