ner, and to wit at extent, upon its removal, the merchant vessels of the United States, shall be permitted, in defence of their lawful commerce, to be armed against, and to resist foreign aggression.

On this motion no order has been yet taken.

*Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Marietta, dated Dec. 28.*

"Blannerhasset came into town last week, tarried a few days, and went off in a boat, privately, late in the night. While here he was afraid of every thing, he was afraid of being poisoned in the tavern. I understand that neither he nor Burr will attend their trial at Chillicothe."

We are informed that Aaron Burr on the 31st ult. lodged at Williamsport, Maryland, on his way to Chillicothe.

The legislature of Virginia, with characteristic spirit and promptness, have come forward to express their sentiments in the present crisis of affairs. The following resolution was adopted after a very animated discussion, a great part of which arose on a motion to postpone the consideration of the resolution for a short time. The firm purpose avowed to maintain the rights of the nation, the strong expression of confidence in the administration of the general government, and above all the decided approbation of the Embargo, are more than sufficient answer to the calumnies and murmurs of party opposition. From Virginia, whose patriotism has ever risen with the imminence of public danger, and who has invariably been among the first to assert and the last to abandon the cause of their country, this dignified avowal of principle and feeling was to have been expected; and we have no doubt but that the same spirit will characterise every legislature in the union. For disaffection, however it may rankle in the breasts of a few disappointed partizans, will not be found to have infected the organs of national feeling. Much has been said lately of the impropriety of expressing confidence in the administration, as a mark of servility and meanness. To this the language of the Virginia legislature is a conclusive answer. Is there a more independent body in the world, one that would more scornfully reject servility and meanness? Yet this independent and dignified body has not hesitated to express its strongest approbation of the measures already pursued, and to pledge the whole energies of the state to the support of such measures as may be adapted to produce an honorable peace, or avenge the injured honor of these states.

The preamble was agreed to—Ayes 157—Noes 13.

"The General Assembly of Virginia taking into their most serious consideration the present crisis in our political affairs, and the circumstances which have tended to produce it, would be unpardonably negligent, were they to remain silent. They deeply regret that they have been disappointed in their ardent wish, that the United States might be forever exempt from those disastrous convulsions, which have been so long desolating Europe. In the strict and impartial neutrality practised by the American government to all nations; in the inviolable regard which it has so scrupulously paid to justice and good faith, they fondly imagined they had a firm guarantee to the continuance of peace. But from the menacing aspect of affairs, it seems but too probable that this flattering anticipation is about to vanish, and that we shall have to act a part in the melancholy drama of the day. In reviewing the series of causes which are likely to terminate in this result, we derive great consolation from the reflection that the government of the United States has done every thing on its part which was calculated to preserve peace upon honorable terms, and that there is nothing with which it can with propriety be upbraided. The recapitulation in detail of the insults and injuries received, would be tiresome and disgusting. Blockades established contrary to former usage, new and destructive principles interpolated in the laws of nations; our free born citizens impressed on board our own vessels, and torn from their friends and country, have been doomed to perpetual exile and captivity, whilst the cry of "I AM AN AMERICAN CITIZEN," has been treated with contempt and disdain; these are some of the outrages of which we complain, and for which we had demanded reparation for the past, and security against, for the future. In the midst of amicable conference upon those subjects of complaint, arrived the 22d of June, 1807, a day which will be forever memorable in the annals of America.

"History will record that on that day a ship of war belonging to Great Britain made an attack (attended with circumstances the most offensive) upon a national ship of the United States, reposing upon the pledged security of public faith, and that amidst the groans of murdered citizens, the flag of the United States, the sacred emblem of our liberty and independence, was seen cowering beneath British audacity, and British violence.

"The sensations arising from this daring outrage, pervaded with the rapidity of lightning, this vast continent, and produced one uniform sentiment of indignation, under the influence of which, disappeared all party distinctions. We exhibited to the world the pleasing spectacle of a widely extended nation, with one accord, burying in the tomb of its slaughtered citizens all party differences, and with one voice demanding ample vengeance or honorable reparation. The General Assembly in reviewing the conduct of the government of the United States in this trying exigency, rejoice to reflect upon the dignified attitude by it assumed, one that was supported by firmness, and tempered with moderation. It has been ascertained to the world, that if war ensue, the United States are innocent of the calamities inseparably incident to that state of things. And with confidence in that Providence which seems to have made these states so peculiarly its care, we firmly anticipate the aid of Heaven, and a propitious result. We should be wanting in frankness, were we to suppress our anxiety for the preservation of peace, but it must be a peace purchased with no sacrifice of honor. The honor of a nation, it is believed, on the part of the General Assembly, is a jewel of inestimable value to be maintained at every hazard.—Inspired with this sentiment, we have weighed it against every sacrifice, and accept it as an equivalent. It is a duty we owe ourselves to declare, that we submit with pleasure to the privations arising from the energetic measures recently adopted by the constituted authorities in the laying an embargo. We feel flattered by the confidence which they reposed in our patriotism and self-denial, and we hereby beg leave to assure the general government, that this step meets our warmest approbation.

"*Resolved unanimously*, That the General Assembly penetrated with a most affectionate regard for the welfare of our common country, and viewing with indignation the insults and injuries which have been offered us, hereby solemnly pledge the whole energies of this commonwealth to the support of such measures as may be adapted to produce an honorable peace, or avenge the injured honor of these states."

The following strong remarks of one of the greatest statesmen and honestest men, ever born in Britain, exhibits in a correct and forcible point of light the despotic principles contended for by the existing British ministry. If these remarks were justly applied in 1795, with how much greater truth do they apply to the present times.

In one respect they are peculiarly poignant. "It is only, says this illustrious man, "to the weak and defenceless that you talk big. To the great and powerful you apologise, and agree to pay for all the injustice you have done them." If this be true—and no man knew human nature better than Mr. Fox—are we not called upon to maintain the character which we really possess, the character of a great and powerful nation; and by taking those decisive measures, which shall no longer subject us to the scorn of being weak and defenceless, compel that from strength which has so long been denied to justice. Nature and our political institutions have already made us a *great*, and it only requires a developement of our resources, to prove that we are a *powerful* nation. Let us then discard the language of submission. Let us take ground from which nothing can shake us. Let us assert our just rights, in such a way as to convince the word that we will not abandon them, let their maintenance cost what it may.

*Extract from Mr. Fox's Speech, delivered in Parliament, in the year* 1795.

"With respect to America, I shall say nothing at present, except that, after giving orders for taking her ships we recalled those orders, and have since entered into a treaty by which we agree, properly I believe, justly, and if justly, wisely, to pay for the rashness and folly of issuing them. Next, with regard to Denmark and Sweden, which were in this case so intimately connected in point of interest, that whatever was addressed to the one might be considered in fact, although not in form, as addressed to the other. To the court of Copenhagen, we presented memorial after memorial, couched in most peevish and offensive terms of remonstrance, on the neutrality of his Danish majesty. These memorials were answered by the minister, Mr. Bernstoff, with such temper, firmness and diplomatic knowledge, as obliged us at length to desist, and raised his character higher than that of any Danish minister ever was before. We engaged in a diplomatic contest upon the subject of neutrality, in which we showed our complete ignorance of the rights of neutral nations, and were foiled accordingly.

"What has been our conduct towards the Grand Duke of Tuscany, a Prince who although belonging to one of the most illustrious families of Europe, is known not to be possessed of any great military power? Lord Hervey goes to the Grand Duke of Tuscany—not to the Emperor, the king of Prussia, or any potent monarch—and says to him, "Can you pretend to maintain neutrality with such a government as that of France?"—Calling the French government all the hard names which regular governments think themselves authorised to bestow upon it; and now recollecting that one of the heaviest accusations against the French was their having presumed to intermeddle in the internal politics of other nations—"Can you basely refuse joining the league against the murderers of your aunt, the declared enemies of your family, and the avowed subverters of all established government, order and religion? I know to what cause your hesitation is owing. It is because you give credit to bad ministers. It is because you lend too favorable an ear to the advice of your minister Manfredini, a man who has gained a pernicious ascendancy over your mind, but who ought no longer to have any share in your councils." Lord Hervey, after thus telling an independent prince that he was not to listen to the advice of his own ministers, might with equal propriety have gone on to tell him that he ought to be guided solely by the counsels of the right honorable gentleman over against me. 'Your ministers,' he might have said, "are ignorant and incapable; the British ministers are wise and able. Observe into what a situation they have brought their own country, and you cannot doubt with what wisdom and vigor they will consult for yours." This language of lord Hervey has never been disavowed by ministers. It has even been imitated by his successor, & therefore I must consider it as having been the language of his instructions: and thus by menace and insult was the Grand Duke of Tuscany compelled to renounce his new system of neutrality, contrary to his own inclination, to the advice of his ministers, and the interests of his people. Such was the conduct of ministers when we were powerful in the Mediterranean. Lord Hervey was at length recalled, and another gentleman whom I personally respect was appointed in his stead, and instructed to follow the same course. At last, after we lose our power in the Mediterranean; when events turn out against us; we submit not only to the neutrality of the Duke of Tuscany, but to his concluding a treaty of peace and amity with the French Republic.

"What has been your conduct towards Genoa? Ministers hold the same language towards that state, and tell them, "If you continue in your neutrality, it must be offensive to the combined powers, and may give occasion to revive claims which must lead to disagreeable consequences:" a meaner threat never was employed. Who are the parties in this mighty contest?—Great Britain, taking upon herself to dictate for all the combined powers, and the republic of Genoa; this country not only admonishes the republic of Genoa against observing a neutrality, but threatens her with war if she does. Look at this, and see a picture of insolence, injustice and meanness, exceeded only by the feebleness of the attempt to follow it up! The fortune of war being against you, even the little republic of Genoa is stout; and after blockading her port, you are content to withdraw your ships, and forced to submit to her neutrality with an ungracious apology for the injustice you have done. By such conduct you have impaired the character of the nation for justice and magnanimity, and given to Great Britain a character of meanness and insolence which was never before imputed to her, a character which has destroyed more countries than the loss of armies. To put this in a stronger point of view, contrast it with your conduct to America. Did you tell America that all intercourse with France was disgraceful, until France should restore her King? No! It is only to the weak and defenceless that you talk big. To the great and powerful you apologize, and agree to pay for all the injustice you have done them.

"Examine the law of nations; if any one question in the law of nations be clearer and more generally acknowledged than another, it is that of a right in every nation, which no treaty obliges to the contrary, to preserve a complete neutrality.—Consider the sacredness of this right, and the miserable condition of every weak country, if whenever great powers go to war, for what they may call cause of justice, order, religion and regular government, but what others may think views of ambition and aggrandizement, every weak prince, every petty republic, were to be compelled to take a part in the contest.—If such were to be the condition of society—if men were not allowed to enjoy that neutrality which their independence entitles them to, they would begin to doubt the benefits of society, and listen to the paradoxes of those who maintain, that all established rules and principles are founded in ignorance and error; and that society itself, as at present constituted, is not worth preserving."

## CONGRESS.

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11.

*Debate on the bill from the Senate authorising the building of gun-boats and for the defence of ports and harbors.*

Mr. G. W. CAMPBELL said it had not been his intention to speak on this subject. There was sufficient cause to induce him still to decline entering into the debate; his indisposition would certainly prevent him from examining the subject in that manner which its importance required; and he would therefore have persevered in his original intention of remaining silent, had not an attempt been made to make an impression on the public mind, that the friends of this measure were about to drain the Treasury of the U. States for a system of defence that would prove insufficient; for a mere useless experiment. This might therefore require some explanation, that the motives of gentlemen who were about to vote for this system of defence should be known as well as their objects. In the discussion of this subject gentlemen had also gone into an examination of the utility of our naval establishment, and the expediency of increasing it at this time, which was in his opinion a distinct subject, that had little or no connection with the proposed measure; it would be time sufficient to examine that question when it came properly before the House. There had also been a very novel mode of argument introduced on this occasion, and it was the second time it had been used during the present session; that of gentlemen arguing against the expediency of a measure, while they declared their intentions to vote for it. This was indeed a new method of legislating, and may be intended to answer a double purpose. It may perhaps enable gentlemen to say to those of their constituents opposed to this measure, if such there are, "we were inimical to it; we exposed its weakness in the House, & shewed its inefficiency, you cannot therefore blame us for its adoption;" while on the other hand they might say to the friends of the measure, "we have supported it by our votes, and are therefore entitled to your confidence on that ground." Mr. C. did not say that this was the object of gentlemen; but if it was not, it appeared to him difficult to ascertain what it could be. It would have appeared much more consistent for those gentlemen who seriously believed the system to be useless, to vote as well as speak against it; and it were to be wished that those who intended to vote for the bill before the House, had permitted it to pass without opposing it; but as this course of argument had been pursued, he deemed it a duty he owed to his country, to those whom he had the honor to represent, and to himself, to express to the House (though in a very brief manner) some of the reasons which would induce him to vote for the bill. He did not pretend to possess much information on the subject of gun-boats; he had therefore hitherto declined entering into the discussion, and waited to hear what might be advanced on the subject by those who had greater opportunities than himself of knowing their efficiency or inefficiency; but he found those who had spoken on this subject, were obliged like himself to depend on the information of others; and did not pretend to furnish the House with any practical knowledge on this subject. They must therefore form their opinions from the reasoning on the case, and such evidence as they were possessed of.

The first important enquiry would seem to be, whether the present state of our relations with foreign powers was such as required the adoption of effective measures for national defence. It appeared to be agreed by all that it was; no one denied the importance of the present crisis; it could not be denied by any gentleman who would reflect a moment on the repeated aggressions that have been committed on our commerce; the violated rights of our seamen; the insult offered to our national flag, and the murder of our fellow citizens. These all go to prove incontestibly the necessity of our putting the nation in a state of defence. The next enquiry was, of what nature ought our defensive preparations to be? It is clear they ought to be calculated to meet and repel the attacks that we have a right to expect from those who are likely to become our enemies.—Those attacks are to be expected on our coast and seaport towns, which are most exposed, and most vulnerable to a marauding enemy. The species of defence, therefore, that we ought to adopt, should certainly be such as was calculated to protect, as far as in our power, our coast, our harbors, and our seaport towns from insult and ruin; unless indeed these are to be abandoned to the enemy on his first approach. We are then to determine whether we shall defend these or not. Will the nation consent to expose to an enemy without an effort to repel him, until he has landed the whole extent of your sea coast, all your seaport towns on the margin of the ocean? This would be a dangerous experiment, and he had supposed too wild a scheme to be advocated by any reflecting politician; though it seemed to be the favorite doctrine of some gentlemen in this House, who were opposed to every species of defence, except placing arms in the hands of the militia. It is true the foe might be repelled by your militia, and no doubt would be; but what would the citizens of those towns and on your sea coast say? Would they not justly complain that you had neglected their interest, had deserted them in the day of danger, and left them to be pillaged, and destroyed by an enemy without one effort to protect them? They certainly would, and their complaints would be well founded. There were, however, he presumed, but very few willing to subscribe to this doctrine. Though it had been advocated by some gentlemen in this House, who appeared opposed not only to ships of war and gun-boats, but also to fortifications.

Taking it then as admitted, that the coast and sea-port towns are to be defended against naval attacks; what were the means in their power best calculated to effect that object? On this point there was, as might be expected, some difference of opinion. Mr. *Campbell* believed it would not be contended by any gentleman that our coast and sea-port towns could be effectually defended by fortifications alone. No man was so wild in his plans as to say so. The whole coast from Maine to the Gulph of Mexico, cannot be fortified—some other mode of defence must therefore be resorted to. He apprehended also, it would not be contended that the naval force now in our possession in addition to fortifications, was sufficient to afford effectual protection to our seaports. This had not been pretended; its inefficiency was too well known for a single individual to rely upon it. There was then no question on the point that they must acquire an additional floating force in aid of fortifications—What kind of addition was it in their power to make? There was but one alternative left them—either to build an additional number of ships of war sufficient for that object, or to resort to the system of gun-boats. They had been very earnestly called upon by some gentlemen to make an addition to the navy, and unite this with gun-boats. This would probably be found impracticable at the present crisis. Mr. C. had expected that those gentlemen who wished to have reduced the number of gun-boats proposed, and substitute a few frigates in their place, would have shewn the practicability of building those frigates in sufficient time to answer the present exigency. If this could not be effected the proposition was useless. Mr. C. said the building of a large navy was not consistent with the policy or interest of this country. If it were in their power to do so, it would be at war with the genius of their government, the interests of the people, and the security of their liberties. But Mr. C. observed their means were not adequate to raise a navy sufficient to cope with that of G. Britain. This could not be pretended. Besides, if such a navy was even presented to them free of expence, and ready for service, it would be their duty, and the interest of the nation, to sink or destroy it, rather than incur the enormous expence necessary to support it, and the danger into which it might bring the rights and liberties of the people. But, said Mr. C. suppose it should be determined according to the wishes of gentlemen to build a few ships of war in aid of gun-boats, let us enquire whether such a measure would answer the present purpose, or whether any advantage could be expected from the ships so to be built. It is stated on the floor of this House, particularly by some gentlemen who are in favor of building ships for defence, that the nation is either now at war, or on the eve of war. The means of defence must therefore be such as can speedily be prepared for, and brought into actual service. Suppose a law was passed authorising the building of ships of war, how long before they would be ready for defence? The Secretary of the Navy in a report made to this House two years ago, (in 1805) expressly stated, "that from the time Congress would authorize the building of 74 gun-ships, it would require 3 years to prepare one for being launched." It is true he states that six might be prepared in the same time. This was the official report of the Secretary, and whose duty it was to be acquainted with this subject, & have these vessels built if authorised, and there is, therefore, no reason to believe a less time would be sufficient. It would be in vain for gentlemen to say, that frigates could be built in a much shorter time than 74s, the difference of time necessary for the erection of each of these kinds of vessels must be inconsiderable. They could not expect to build frigates in less than two years; and suppose you had six or ten of them in that time, ready for sea, what is to defend you in the mean time? Has any gentleman, who can, and will reflect on the subject, such confidence in the friendly politeness of those who are likely to become our enemies, as to suppose that, if we are to have war, they would wait and refrain from hostility until those ships of war were prepared to defend the nation? And if not what benefit can be derived towards defence from beginning to build them at this time? None that can be perceived. You cannot, said Mr. C. have them in time to defend you against the impending storm—it must blow over before they are ready—Will you then lay out your resources