could walk, and swim. We abjure this embargo liberty.

Where is the spirit of '76, the gentleman from North Carolina asked the other day, where is it? It was a glorious spirit—a spirit which I wish to see introduced at this time; it is a spirit which I wish to be made popular on this floor. But let gentlemen recollect that the spirit of '76 was not a spirit of mere indignation; it was a spirit of decided energy—a spirit which called all the resources of the nation into operation. There was no such sentiment recognised in all the era of '76 as that expressed now. You will not find in the annals of that period such a sentiment as this: "There is no alternative but war with both nations or a continuance of the present system." You will find in '76 no such alternative presented to the minds of the people; no proposition for abandoning your rights under pretence of maintaining them. The language then was, "You have endeavored to reduce us to base and abject submission; therefore we will not submit." That spirit of '76 was not an attempt to affright the people to an abandonment of their rights. In the whole year '76 no such words were heard as "embargo," "as dignified retirement," and "receding which could do one another the most harm." In '75 we had a navy; yes, as little as gentlemen relish the name, we had a navy which lined our coast and protected our commerce. We had an army too and a noble army. It was an army of the best blood of the country; the citizens composing it sprung up from their ploughs to meet the enemy, and straightened their pruning hooks into spears. Yes, we had an army in '76, and WASHINGTON at the head of it. I warn gentlemen not to talk about the spirit of '76; it may learn them some lessons that they may not perhaps be willing to hear. I will read out of the list of causes which produced the revolution, and the declaration and confirmation of our independence, some of the complaints. Mr. Quincy quoted the sentences from the declaration of independence, which state the imposing unnecessary restrictions on trade, cutting off commerce, embarrassing our fisheries, invasion of private property, increasing the authority of the commander in chief and making him commander of a colony, and transporting citizens from their homes for trial for imaginary offences, as reasons for throwing off the allegiance of Great Britain. He advised gentlemen not to call to their aid the spirit of '76. It would not come to them; or if it did come, it would be with the aspect of an indignant tormentor. He advised them to take care, lest where they looked for encouragement they should meet with an awful repulse.

But it was said that to oppose the embargo is a submission to tribute. This word tribute Mr. Quincy said was a stalking horse for the popular ear. It was idle to pretend that those who advocated the rights of their fellow citizens, who were in favor of going on the ocean and defending them against the world, were in favor of paying an export duty to the British government. He begged gentlemen to put out of the debate this word TRIBUTE; there was no man in the country who would advocate the payment of a tribute. In the first place it ought to be observed that it was very doubtful that this celebrated tribute, which was running so much in the popular ear, could in any instance be paid; and if it could be paid, Mr. Quincy said it was completely in the power of the House to prohibit it. France said that we should not go to Great Britain; that any neutral vessel having been even spoken by a British cruizer should be liable to condemnation. Great Britain says you shall come to our harbors and pay us an export duty for going to France; and if we go there we go to certain confiscation. This was the "tribute" of which a national council like this was to make a bugbear. If American vessels were to go on the ocean to morrow they might be prevented from doing this. Declare your rights, said he, and there is no man on this floor or in the nation who will not second you. But suppose this tribute inevitable—what of it? Great Britain smites you on one cheek; you turn the other. She takes away your cloak; you strip yourself naked. She requires us to abstain from a certain trade; we say we will not only abstain from that, but from all trade. This may be a resistance; but it is a mode of maintaining our honor and liberties in which I will not acquiesce. We find gentlemen wringing their hands, and asking if we take off the embargo what shall we do? It is not for me, a minority-man, a humble uninfluential individual on this floor, to propose a plan, but to my humble conception our path is as clear as the milky way, all splendid with stars. It is the path of our duty, of the exercise of our rights, a path not of submitting to the decrees and giving up our commerce, but the path of defending our rights on the ocean. But this may be war eventually. Well—are we now at peace? What is our situation? We are bandaged up. Gentlemen must remember that the way to prevent war is not to tell the people that there is no other alternative but the embargo. There is an honorable mode without an abandonment of our rights.

These Mr. Quincy said were the several ideas which he offered to the House on this subject. He considered this resolution as a pledge not to be mistaken of a new system of measures, of a system of permitting our citizens to go on the ocean—of permitting a portion of our citizens whose only hopes were centered in it, to go there.

MR. BACON.—In all the various discussions which have arisen in the House on the great subject of our foreign relations, and on the general course of measures which were adopted in reference to them, in the course of the last session, I do not at present recollect having occupied the time of the House in listening to any observations of mine on those general subjects. I have heretofore forborne from trespassing upon their patience on two considerations; because I had been persuaded that the discussion was already in much abler hands than my own, and because I was strongly impressed with a conviction, that in the perilous and momentous crisis to which the affairs of this country had been for the year past verging, both the house and the nation required from their Representatives on this floor, less argument, and more action, less declamation, and more decision. I am now fully sensible, that both these considerations continue to exist in their full force, and that the interests of the people will not always be best subserved by him, who occupies their time by the most elaborate speeches, or amuses them with the best chosen rhetorical figures.

Impressed with the full force of these reflections, I should still have continued to listen to others in silence, had I not have conceived myself pretty loudly called upon by the observations of my colleague yesterday, and did I not think it a duty at this early period to rescue the report of the select committee, one of whom I had the honor to be, from those imputations which have been improperly heaped upon it by him; as also to meet some of those remarks which he seemed to direct particularly to myself.

That gentleman opened his address, by expressing his entire and unqualified concurrence in the broad position which is set up in that general resolution reported by the select committee which is now before us. And what was his reason? Because, said he, that resolution if adopted, must be considered as a specific pledge on the part of this House, for an entire departure from that general system of restrictive policy which has been pursued during the past year. If the gentleman indeed viewed the resolution in this light, why would he not suffer it to glide through with that silent and general acquiescence which on all hands seemed to be promised to it? Why step aside with so much zeal to attack that system which, upon his supposition, no one was about any more to defend? Why make it the great laboring point of his very labored and systematic argument, to discredit that odious embargo system which he affected to think every one now was about to give up? Was it because his hostility to it was so deep, that he could not bear to see it die, unless he had a hand in contributing to its exit, and was determined to shew his constituents that in the language of sportsmen he also was in "at the death." The only reason, which I recollect to have been given by him for this unusual course was, that the future adherence to this embargo system was specifically recommended by the report of the committee. Whatever may be the future judgement of this House on the policy of continuing this measure for a longer period, or assuming a different position, I assert that no such recommendation is contained in that report, and it is inconceivable to me on what part of it the gentleman will support his assertion; so far from this, that the decision of that great question, and the expediency of electing either that or another alternative, is expressly left open to the House by the committee themselves.—(Mr. B. here read the following paragraph from the report in justification of his construction of it.

"On a question of such difficulty, involving the most important interests of the union, and which has not perhaps, until lately, been sufficiently considered, your committee think the House alone competent to pronounce a decisive opinion; and they have, in this report confined themselves to an exposition of the subject, and to such introductory resolutions, as will be equally applicable to either alternative."

The gentleman therefore is evidently utterly unsupported in imputing to the report what it expressly disavows; & cannot certainly justify the course which he took by any apology of this sort. But even if the question of the embargo was one which could properly arise out of any part of the system recommended by the committee, it certainly was in no degree connected with the general declaratory resolution now under consideration; and the gentleman's observations, if applicable to any stage of the discussions, were obviously premature, and "a leaping before he came to the style." The same remark would apply to the observations which we heard from the friend (political friend I mean) of my colleague from Kentucky; but which it is impossible I should think of answering on this floor. That the last mentioned gentleman should have suffered himself to wander into so irregular a course, is not at all surprising; he is not a standing professor of method. But my honorable colleague is a man who in the course of his every day discussions in this House, entrenches himself in all the niceties of a special pleader; he is a man of fine distinctions, of divisions and subdivisions, & who will generally war upon a single word which he finds out of the ranks, and wage hostility upon a straggling adverb; much more then should I have expected, that he would not have allowed himself to stray into an argument so wholly irrelative to the subject immediately before the committee, and into observations so entirely premature. The gentleman, to use the language of the day, raised the embargo upon his anti embargo speech before the time; whether it was because it has been so long on hand, that like some other articles it might have spoiled by longer keeping, I will not undertake to say.

But although the course which the gentleman took in his view of the subject before us, might not itself be correct, yet I feel myself now in some measure justified, if not strongly called upon, to follow him in some of those remarks upon our past measures and present state, which he has handed to the committee.

The first remark of his which demands notice at present was, that the principles which he found avowed in the report of the select committee, were loathsome in his view, and disgraceful to the nation. As the gentleman has seen fit on this point to deal only in general allegations, it is impossible for me to vindicate from his reproaches any of those particular positions which are so much the object of his abhorrence. Is it that concluding paragraph which is so offensive to the gentleman?

"And it may not be useless that every foreign nation should understand, that its aggressions never will be justified or encouraged by any description of American citizens. For the question for every citizen now is, whether he will rally round the government of his choice, or inlist under foreign banners? Whether he will be for his country or against his country?"

I hope it was not this sentiment which bore with it so loathsome a relish; but it is not for me to select those parts of it which he is offended with, and which he has denounced only by general allegations. The gentleman had before, in commenting on the general resolution reported by the committee, remarked that he was opposed usually to abstract legislation and general declaratory resolutions, viewing it as he did to be usually the resort of weakness or of ignorance; and yet he can himself thus deal in general and sweeping denunciations of that report. It is not for me to make the application of his former maxim.

But, says the gentleman, of what use can be the declaration which is set up in this resolution, that the rights, honor and independence of our country were violated by the edicts of G. Britain and France; for who questions it? I am glad, sir, to hear at last, from so high authority, that there can be no question raised on this point. Accustomed as I have been for a long time past to be told, through the medium of too many of those prostituted gazettes which live upon the perverted passions of the day, and disgrace the nation which supports them, that this government and not Great Britain were the real aggressors in the present controversy; that she, instead of being the injuring, was in truth the injured party, and had therefore the best right to complain, I rejoice to see these calumnies at last put down by so commanding an authority, and hope that from this time the public are to be imposed upon by them no longer. To those unquestionable invasions of our national rights, the gentleman further agrees, in general terms, that this nation ought not to submit. But what, says he, do your past measures amount to but submission? I well know that this language has been the catch-word of Newspaper argument during the summer past, and am not altogether surprised at hearing the sophism renewed at this time; and how does the gentleman proceed to prove it? Submission (says he) is the agreeing to a thing ordered by another in the manner that he prescribes or refraining to do a thing that he prohibits you from doing. England says that we shall not trade with France and her allies, and they in their turn say that we shall not trade with England—We prohibit altogether the trade with both. His conclusion is, that we submit to the course prescribed by both. But, sir, is the refraining from our trade with both those powers pursuing that course of conduct which the interest of either of them demands, or the policy and spirit of their edicts against us evidently holds forth? It is as much the interest and the wish of G. Britain that we should continue our trade with her, as that we should forbear it with France and her allies—What have we said by the embargo? that we will forbear the latter and continue the former? No: but that unless you take off your interdictions against that trade which you wish to deprive us of, you shall not have the benefits of that other trade which it is your interest and your wish to have us pursue. The policy of the French edicts and their effect upon our interests and rights being precisely similar, the measure which we mete to them is also the same. Again, says the gentleman, the embargo is not only submission to both, but it is aiding directly the policy of both against each other; for, says he, the object of France is to compress the commerce of Great Britain. The withdrawing of our trade aids that policy. The policy of G. Britain is to cut up neutral trade to France, and thereby excite discontent and revolt amongst her subjects, and the withdrawing of our trade aids that policy. By the gentleman's own argument then, it is proved that the embargo has operated as a measure of compression, of inconvenience, or in other words of coercion against both powers; upon G. Britain by compressing and narrowing her trade, and upon France by withholding her customary supplies; and the very same argument by which he attempts to prove that it is in accordance with the policy of the one, proves also that it is in hostility with that of the other, that it is, so far as it goes, resistance; and this is all that was ever contended for by its advocates. I take the gentleman now solely upon his own argument, without drawing to my aid other considerations which strengthen and explain this conclusion.

But the gentleman will allow nothing to be considered as resistance, which is not bottomed on powder and ball; every other measure, as one of coercion, must be submission. In the natural world every order of animals is endowed with its own peculiar weapons of annoying its antagonist, and waging war in its defence; and most of them are different from each other. Would it be strange if there was a similar variety in the organization of nations. Because G. Britain wages hostility only by ships of war and great guns, does it follow that this country cannot and must not attempt to do it in any other mode, at least for a temporary period? or because Napoleon attacks his enemies with muskets and bayonets, must the U. States be allowed to use only those weapons? Even in open and actual war, fortresses are not always taken by open and direct assault; it is frequently found most practicable to reduce them by the slower operations of a siege, and the holding of supplies. This may at times be the policy of a nation, and before other means are resorted to, may be a prudent and a wise policy. Those means failing, they must, to be sure, in the last resort, rely upon that which is emphatically called the last appeal of nations, and rest their vindication upon the sword; and upon that I trust we shall, if necessary, not be backward to rest ours.

Proceeding as he has heretofore done to represent to this House the interests and the sentiments, not only of all his own constituents, but those of the whole body of Massachusetts, the gentleman declares—that in that state, the opinion that the embargo must at all events be removed is not only general, but universal with every man of every party. Sir, I protest against the right or authority of my colleague to bring before this House the unanimous sentiments of Massachusetts, or to undertake in himself alone to represent their united interests. That the people of that state have suffered, and are now suffering much from the present pressure of our national concerns, is not denied; that they all ardently wish that our commerce should be opened so soon as is compatible with the great interests of the nation, cannot be doubted; in this wish, the interest and the most sincere desires of all here as well as there must unite. They have ardently hoped that such a repeal might take place, consistent with the policy on which these laws were originally founded, at the opening of Congress; and they as well as the government itself had the best reason to suppose at a particular period that this might have been done. But that the undivided voice of the people of Massachusetts has ever been expressed unequivocally, that the embargo ought at all events, and without any regard to the existing or future state of things, to be forthwith removed, is a position of which that gentleman has no evidence. On this subject, the opinions of a large portion of the citizens of Massachusetts, like those of their brethren elsewhere, have been formed upon no decisive system of measures; they repose with as much confidence as they ought to do, in the wisdom and information of the government, for the adoption of that course which under all circumstances shall be thought the most prudent and eligible, and in that course, whatever it shall be, they will, I trust, acquiesce as good citizens, and carry it into effect with an undivided will. But coming here, says the gentleman, under the impression of this universal sentiment that the embargo must be removed, and meeting with men who, after hearing the incantations of the great enchanter, intimate that it may be best longer to continue it, I feel utterly astonished, seem to have got into the regions of magic, and ask whether this House is mad! Sir, it would not be the first instance wherein the madman himself has fancied that his own insanity was imputable to others. There is an eminent instance in sacred writ, wherein madness was unjustly charged upon one, who spoke to his accuser only the words of truth and soberness. But if the gentleman means to intimate, that by the incantations of any man or men, the members of this House are operated upon by any undue influence, independent of their own judgment and views of propriety; in behalf of myself and those with whom I am generally happy in acting, I repel the charge, and pronounce it altogether unmerited. We know of no such enchantment and we act under none. The insinuation, if so intended, is altogether unwarranted.

We are asked by the gentleman in the common language of the day, whether any man thinks that the people of New-England are to be indefinitely prohibited from the use of the ocean, and commerce perpetually abandoned? The very words of the report which he so much reprobates furnishes the best answer to this suggestion. It is there stated—

"The aggressions of England and France collectively, affecting almost the whole of our commerce, and persisted in, notwithstanding repeated remonstrances, explanations and propositions the most candid and unexceptionable, are to all intents and purposes, a maritime war waged by both nations against the U. States. It cannot be denied that the ultimate and only effectual mode of resisting that warfare if persisted in, is war. A permanent suspension of commerce, after repeated and unavailing efforts to obtain peace, would not properly be resistance; it would be withdrawing from the contest and abandoning our indisputable right freely to navigate the ocean. The present unsettled state of the world, the extraordinary situation in which the United States are placed, and the necessity, if war be resorted to, of making it at the same time against both nations, and these the two most powerful of the world are the principal causes of hesitation. There would be none in resorting to that remedy, however calamitous, if a selection could be made on any principle of justice, or without a sacrifice of national independence."

The idea of this perpetual abandonment of the ocean, so often held up as the catch word of party, is expressly negatived by the report, and exists no where but in the imagination of those who sound it. If we can ultimately make our way upon the ocean by no other means, we must fight it there, the only question is when is the proper period to adopt it.

In his remarks upon some observations which fell from me in the course of our secret session, my colleague asks triumphantly, what are the means which I possess of knowing the actual situation of the various classes of people in Massachusetts, under the operation of the embargo? I have travelled more than once during the summer past from the sea board to the Western frontiers of that state. Has the gentleman himself done as much? But have I been in the cities, seen the general desertion of their streets, and the ships rotting at the wharves? Yes, sir, I have been more than once in more than one of our principal cities, but have not seen that total desertion of the streets which is spoken of; I have seen indeed a great contrast to the picture exhibited in those times of profound peace and unparalleled prosperity which immediately preceded the present stagnation of business. But I have still seen much occupation and pretty general employment of some sort or other, for most classes of the citizens, but have seen or heard of no one starving in those streets. But have I conversed with merchants? Yes, sir, I have even conversed with merchants, have been to this oracle of all wisdom, as the gentleman seems to look upon them. I have conversed freely with more than one merchant, who had himself as many of his ships rotting at his wharves, as most merchants of our country, and have found many of them, though suffering their full proportion of the general pressure of the times, satisfied, that nothing better could have been done, convinced that by the adoption of any other alternative they could not have expected immediate relief, and willing to forego their immediate interest for the general good